

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Names Limited

Iowa Manufacturing Extension Partnership

New Equipment Design Helps Names Limited Expand

Client Profile:

Names Limited manufactures names, numbers, and custom art in transfer and stencil format for the sports team market. The company, established in 1978 in Sioux City, Iowa, is privately owned and employs approximately 10 people.

Situation:

When Brad Grier purchased Names Limited in 1998, he did so with the goal of expanding company market share and annual sales. To expand production, the company needed another stencil machine. However, the legacy stencil making equipment had been custom built by the original proprietor; there were no original specs or schematics to work from in order to duplicate the equipment. Names Limited contacted the Iowa Manufacturing Extension Partnership (IMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help designing a duplicate machine.

Solution:

IMEP assessed Names Limited's equipment and referred the company to Iowa State University's Center for Industrial Research and Service (CIRAS), an IMEP partner. A CIRAS engineer was assigned to create a duplicate and possibly improved machine. The process began by identifying each component of the original machine and then either producing or purchasing the components to build the new machine. As CIRAS slowly pieced together a duplicate machine, it developed engineering schematics and instructions so that additional machines could be produced in the future.

Results:

Designed and built a duplicate stencil-making machine.
Increased sales by approximately 35 percent.
Moved from a regional market to a national market.

Testimonial:

"The Iowa Manufacturing Extension Partnership, along with CIRAS, provided the expertise needed to pull this all together. Although it was a long road, the final machine meets all my expectations, and I am now set to duplicate it with minimal effort and greatly reduced costs."

Brad Grier, President

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field